

ARTICLE APPEARED  
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# High-Tech Leaks

The massive leaks of militarily useful technology from West Germany to the Soviet bloc will take years to plug, according to a secret CIA report. The reason is that the West Germans simply don't want to shut down the profitable high-tech traffic.

This is the sobering conclusion of the CIA report, titled "Transfer of Strategic Technology to the Soviet Union from West Germany." My associates Michael Binstein and Dale Van Atta have reviewed the highly sensitive report.

The CIA notes that the West Germans have traditionally paid lip service to the idea of limiting the flow of military technology to the Soviet bloc. But West Germany has opposed putting any teeth into the repeated attempts to restrict the traffic as recommended by COCOM, the coordinating committee set up by the Western allies to control West-East trade.

"The Kohl government, like previous governments, sees expanding trade between West Germany and the Soviet Union as essential to its economy and its balance of foreign trade," the

CIA explains. "West Germany will therefore continue to interpret COCOM regulations narrowly in its own best interests. West Germany is (also) opposed to trade embargoes for political purposes and will resist U.S. attempts to exercise extraterritorial control over West German subsidiaries of U.S. firms."

The report chides West German licensing authorities and intelligence agencies as "ineffective" in trying to control illegal technology sales to the Soviets. They have acted effectively only when "outside sources" (the CIA, presumably) have given them evidence of illegalities.

Here are some specific points the report makes about the West Germans' performance:

- The diversity and efficiency of West Germany's industries and banks, its excellent transportation system and its convenient location next door to Soviet-bloc nations and neutral countries make it an obvious target for Soviet efforts to obtain Western high-tech items.

- "Small, entrepreneurial firms in West Germany . . . continue to be the main instrument of

Soviet-bloc diversionary efforts. . . . An industrial security-awareness program is needed to sensitize law-abiding West German firms."

- Soviet military shoppers take full advantage of West Germany's system of bonded customs transit zones, where customs agents are forbidden to snoop without evidence of probable violations. "Customs agents should be sensitized to the need for inspection of suspicious shipments," the CIA report says, "in particular those received from abroad which are reexported to a foreign destination without being delivered to their original West German consignee."

- The fox is in charge of the chicken coop. Export controls are a responsibility of the Ministry of Economics, which wants to encourage foreign trade. Not surprisingly, the trade control office suffers from understaffing and other problems, the CIA reports.

The report glumly predicted that "it will be several years before West German enforcement is significantly improved in the area of illegal trade."

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